



STEPHEN M. LINSKY – WARD 2 ALDERMAN

FALL 2009 CONSTITUENT UPDATE

Hello Everyone:

As always, it's wonderful to be able to report to you on my service this past year as your ward representative on the Board of Aldermen. In addition to issuing annual reports and publishing notices in the Newton TAB, I periodically post items, including this report, on the city's website at: <http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/Aldermen/constituents.asp>. I have also held a number of monthly constituent office hours at the Newton Senior Center.

As we approach a year of great potential change with a new mayor and new Board and School Committee members, I'd like to particularly acknowledge my appreciation and support for **Reenie Murphy**, who is seeking re-election to her final term on the School Committee.

Adopting Provisions of the Community Partnership Act

We also face a year where we can likely anticipate continued decreases in outside funding, including and especially state funding. Fortunately, with the passage of the Governor's Community Partnership Act, Newton has the ability to draw additional hotel and restaurant revenue. I strongly support adoption of these provisions so that Newton remains a vital and desirable destination for business and residents.

Implementing the Citizen Advisory Group Report

With the publication of the Citizens Advisory Group's final report, we now have a detailed and well researched reference for what we recognize to be significant structural budget deficits. The report can be viewed at: <http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/CitizenAdvisoryGroup/reports/2009/04-109CAGFinalReport.pdf>. In the most recent budget, I joined with others who looked to address some of the chief areas in the report. As Chair of the Public Safety and Transportation Committee, I remain mindful that we must continually examine how public safety services can be delivered in increasingly innovative and cost-effective ways. I am also mindful that putting our capital budget in order will likely require going to the voters on debt exclusions and other measures and making the case on each and every new capital project. Finally, it is time to significantly expand our Services-In-Lieu-Of -Taxes (SILOT) program. Newton schools could greatly benefit from access to services and facilities found in the city's private educational institutions.

Newtonville Village Center Re-Development

While we will not overcome revenue shortfalls by promoting development alone, the Comprehensive Plan adopted by the Board offers a blueprint for re-shaping our village centers for the 21st century. I am convinced we will be able to do this in Newtonville. A public dialogue on potential re-use of the Austin Street parking lot has just begun. It will afford those interested the opportunity to participate in plans to enhance our village center.

Promoting Newton's Green Economy

The need to build a green economy is critical to our economic and environmental future. I have joined efforts to establish eco-teams to help promote environmental and energy-savings practices in Newton homes and businesses. I have also supported the Safe Routes to School programs that has become adopted by nearly every Newton elementary school PTO. That, along with efforts to expand Newton's bike-ability, has an added benefit of promoting public health, especially among the city's youth.

I am interested always in hearing from you, whether it is during my annual fall walking tour of the ward, or at any other time at: (617) 796-1701 or: slinsky@newtonma.gov